

# USC Provost

## Update as of July 19, 2017

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To All USC Faculty:

I know that all of you have been following the recent news stories regarding former dean Carmen Puliafito, and I hope that you have also had a chance to read the [letter](#) that President Nikias sent out to the Trojan community Tuesday evening. As the senior academic officer of the university, and because I am the person who directly oversees the academic deans, I wanted you to hear directly from me.

I know it can be frustrating, especially given the extent of the allegations in the present case, to not be given all the information you may want to have in order to know that the university is living up to its core values. But I think you also realize that we are prohibited from giving out confidential personnel information, which under more normal circumstances is something all of us should appreciate.

Regardless, I want to reassure you that all along we have taken this matter very seriously, that we made what we felt were the best decisions we could make, as swiftly as could be done in a prudent and thoughtful manner, and given the information that we had at any given time. Of course, as in any situation involving allegations of wrongdoing, we continue to examine and address new information as it arises. I promise you that we will take further actions going forward, as warranted, as we learn more.

I have received a few comments from faculty asking about why the university has not taken particular unilateral actions against Dr. Puliafito in light of the recent allegations. As faculty, you know that there are processes we must follow. Peer evaluation, especially in a serious disciplinary matter, is a core academic value. And these values are more important the more serious the situation. If any of us were in a similar situation, we would want the university to follow its established processes in a deliberative and careful manner.

This university is a great institution and it is great in part because of its core values. I assure you that we strive to live up to those values every day. One statement in the USC Code of Ethics reads: "We try to do what is right even if no one is watching us or compelling us to do the right thing." I assure you that we have abided by this statement throughout this tragic and unfortunate situation, and we will continue to do so going forward.

Cc: C. L. Max Nikias  
Academic Senate  
Academic Deans  
President's Cabinet  
Provost's Cabinet